

Read: Isaiah 59:12-20

Sins Are Not Too Many for Jesus

Isaiah 59:12,20

Yes, our rebellious deeds are many before you,
and our sins testify against us.
Our rebellious deeds are with us,
and as for our guilty deeds, we are aware of them.
Then a redeemer will come for Zion
and for those in Jacob who turn from rebellion.
This is the declaration of the Lord.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

How high can you count? 10? 100? 1,000,000? Even higher? How long would it take you to count that high? Ten seconds? 10 minutes? It takes 25 seconds to count to 100, but 100 years to count to a billion. That's amazing.

Can you count how many awful thoughts, rude words, or disobedient actions you committed today? 10? 100? Too many to count? The prophet Isaiah tells us they are *many* before the Lord. The dictionary defines the word *many* as "a large but indefinite number." We have no way of knowing how many because there are *too* many.

Sometimes we know exactly what we did wrong against God and the people around us. Imagine all the other sins we did without even realizing it. Then multiply those sins by the number of days you've lived, and it's clear: our sins are too numerous to count. That's not so amazing. That ought to cause us to cower in a corner.

What's amazing is that even though God knows them all, he has decided to stop counting them. God hurts for you. So he helps you by personally getting involved. "A redeemer will come for Zion and for those in Jacob who turn from rebellion." Zion and Jacob are terms for believers, people who are sorry for their sins. God promised a rescuer, someone who would come to us and say, "I will save you. I will forgive you. Now, go and sin no more." That someone is Jesus ... and that's amazing!

This week includes a special day called Ash Wednesday. It helps us remember and admit our personal sins that are way too many to count. It's kind of painful. But it also focuses us on the very personal and much more pleasant work of our God to forgive us by "not counting people's sins against them" (2 Corinthians 5:19).

That's simply amazing!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- In today's devotion, what did God stop counting?
- What happened that made God decide not to count our sins anymore?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Recount an awful thought, a rude word, or disobedient action you did today. Why is it important to remember it? What does God want you to do with it?
- Sometimes, the memory of something horrible we did comes back into our heads. What thought from today's devotion ought we to then remember?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- A teenager was once overheard saying, "I'm done with this ... and I don't care what you think." Why are those words so dangerous?
- A teenager was once overheard saying, "I have sinned, and not someone else. I repent." Why are those words so courageous?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I daily sin much, yet you cover me with your righteousness. Your Father sees me as perfect. For this I thank and praise you. Give me the desire to do your will. Amen.